CHEPS

CENTER FOR HEALTH ECONOMICS & POLICY STUDIES

INSIDE:

The Making of CHEPS

Forging New Research Paths in Applied Microeconomics & Policy

SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY
College of Arts & Letters

VOLUME 1

2018-2019

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends:

As an undergraduate and graduate student at Cornell University, the faculty of the Department of Policy Analysis & Management made me fall in love with economics. Their passion for students, commitment to research excellence, and dedication to professional service inspired me to become an economics professor. Their ongoing example is one I hope to pass along to my students as Founding Director of the Center for Health Economics & Policy Studies (CHEPS).

CHEPS brings together faculty and students engaged in applied economic research in the areas of health economics, national defense policy, economic demography, and the economics of crime. Our mission is the production of high quality, policy-relevant, impactful scholarship and the mentoring of graduate students to carry the research torch to the next generation.

Since the Center's founding in 2017, research by CHEPS-supported affiliates has been published or is forthcoming in economics and policy journals including *The Review of Economics and Statistics*, *The Journal of Law & Economics*, the *American Journal of Health Economics*, *Health Affairs*, *Industrial Relations*, and the *Southern Economic Journal*. The topics covered in these publications are highly policy relevant: school shootings, medical marijuana laws, minimum wages, same-sex marriage laws, opioid-related mortality, and Medicaid expansions. In August 2018, CHEPS awarded its first set of Faculty Research Fellowships, which will fund course releases and summer salary for promising new projects with similarly high impact potential.

Students are central to the CHEPS research mission. Over 20 students affiliated with CHEPS have received research-related funding, including fellowships that allow intensive research mentoring. Student affiliates have co-authored 10 peer-reviewed publications, including at such journals as *The Journal of Law and Economics*, *Health Economics*, and the *Journal of Population Economics*. Our students also attend and present at academic conferences. Their work reflects an important understanding of welfare economics and the role of free markets in promoting an economically efficient allocation of resources and greater human freedom.

Following their time at SDSU, CHEPS MA students have gone on to PhD programs at Vanderbilt University, the University of California-Santa Barbara, the University of California-Irvine, North Carolina State University, the University of California-Davis, the University of New Hampshire, the University of New Mexico, and Fordham University. Our most recent CHEPS graduate is working as a research associate at the World Bank (see p. 23). Their achievements are truly humbling.

CHEPS students and faculty gather weekly as part of our Research Seminar Series (see p. 15), which brings an impressive group of health and labor economists to SDSU to engage with CHEPS faculty and students. The Seminar Series has added tremendous intellectual vibrancy to the economics community at SDSU. I hope you will visit the CHEPS website (cheps.sdsu.edu), join us at the Seminar Series, and, if you are able, consider a donation to our efforts. Share in our pride of building the next generation of policy analysts.

Sincerely,

Joseph J. Sabia

Joseph J. Sabia
Director of the Center of Health Economics & Policy Studies (CHEPS) and Professor of Economics

CHEPS Student Affiliates
L-R: Niranjana Prasad, Alona Bilokha, Nick Ozanich, Joseph Sabia, Andrew Dickinson, Toshio Ferrazares

Slow-sand filters were cleaned by scraping off the top layer of s
replacing it.

CHEPS Advisory Board Member
Daniel Rees, Professor, Economics,
University of Colorado-Denver

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RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

CHILD ACCESS PREVENTION LAWS, YOUTH GUN CARRYING, AND SCHOOL SHOOTINGS

D. Mark Anderson (Montana State University, NBER & IZA) and Joseph J. Sabia (San Diego State University, University of New Hampshire & IZA)

In a forthcoming paper to be published in *The Journal of Law and Economics* (University of Chicago Press), Center for Health Economics & Policy Studies (CHEPS) affiliates study the effectiveness of safe storage gun laws on school shootings.

In the wake of recent school shootings at Santa Fe High School, Texas and Marjorie Stoneman-Douglass High School, Florida, increased public attention has turned to the root causes of these traumatic events and what can be done to stop them. Research by Drs. D. Mark Anderson (Montana State University) and Joseph J. Sabia (San Diego State University) is the first to examine the impact of Child Access Prevention (CAP) laws on youth gun carrying and school shootings. CAP Laws emerged in the early 1980s to restrict youths' access to firearms by holding adults who furnish such access criminally liable for their actions. These laws, enacted in 26 states and the District of Columbia, fall into two categories: 'Negligent' CAP Laws, in which gun owners are criminally liable for children's gaining access to firearms that are stored negligently; and 'Reckless Endangerment' CAP Laws, which assign culpability for intentionally, knowingly, and/or recklessly providing some or all firearms to children.” Adults can comply with CAP laws by safely storing their firearms, for instance, in a locked cabinet.

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> *While CAP laws reduce youth gun carrying and improve perceived school safety, evidence for school shooting deterrence effects is weaker.*

This paper leverages nationally representative data from the Youth Risky Behaviors Survey (YRBS) to examine the relationship between CAP Laws and several measures of interest – including gun carrying, weapon carrying, school shooting deaths, and a sense of safety at school – among high school-aged youths.

Drs. Sabia and Anderson find that “CAP laws are associated with a nearly 17 percent decrease in the rate of past month gun carrying and a 19 percent decrease in the rate at which students report being threatened or injured with a weapon on school property.” They also find that CAP laws are associated with a lagged decline in the probability that students miss school due to feeling unsafe. Despite finding evidence that CAP laws promote a safer school environment, Sabia and Anderson find little evidence that CAP laws are effective at deterring school-associated shooting deaths. However, they note that these estimates are insufficiently precise to rule out substantially sized effects.

IMPACT OF COMPREHENSIVE SMOKING BANS ON THE HEALTH OF INFANTS AND CHILDREN

Brandy Lipton (San Diego State University), Kerry Anne McGeary (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation), Dhaval Dave (Bentley University, NBER & IZA), and Timothy Roeper (New York University)

A new collaborative study published in the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) Working Paper series examined the effects of smoking bans on the health of infants and children, and the at-home smoking behavior of adults.

For decades, the pervasive use of cigarettes has been treated as a public health crisis. Tobacco has been found to be a contributing factor to the deaths of 480,000 people per year, and increases the risk of many forms of cancer. Tobacco control has been a focus of policymakers since the Surgeon General's 1964 report detailing the adverse health effects of smoking. Identifying that smoking tobacco was associated with a 25 to 26 times higher risk of lung cancer, and that second-hand smoke can be nearly as dangerous, policymakers have turned to a number of interventions for regulating the consumption of tobacco including smoking bans.

Smoking bans - state and local laws that prohibit smoking in indoor venues - were first enacted in the 1970s and have spread throughout the country since. While smoke-free ordinances have been largely heralded as a public health policy success, some argue smoking bans can have a negative effect on the children of smokers. The argument is centered around the idea that as the number of smoke-free public locations rise, adult smokers are more likely to light up inside their homes –increasing the risk of secondhand smoke exposure in young children and infants. The research team's new study examines this argument in the US context. CHEPS affiliate Dr. Brandy Lipton (San Diego State University) and co-authors use data from the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) and U.S. National Vital Statistics System. The study's findings suggest that the most stringent 100% smoke-free laws were associated with increased birth weight among infants and reductions in the likelihood of respiratory symptoms, ear infections, and emergency room visits among children. These results are concentrated among infants and children of low-educated mothers, which may be because these mothers are both more likely to be smokers and also more likely to live in areas where they are exposed to secondhand smoke. The study does not find any evidence that adult smokers are more likely to smoke at home in states and localities with the most stringent smoke-free laws. Since only about 58% of the US population is currently covered by 100% smoke-free laws in all major indoor venues, these findings may inform the decision of whether to implement these policies.

> “
> *100% smoke-free laws are associated with increased birth weight among infants and reductions in the likelihood of respiratory symptoms, ear infections, and emergency room visits.*

MINIMUM CASH WAGES, TIPPED RESTAURANT WORKERS, AND POVERTY

Taylor Mackay (PhD candidate, UC-Irvine), Richard Burkhauser (University of Texas-Austin & NBER), and Joseph J. Sabia (San Diego State University, University of New Hampshire & IZA)

Taylor Mackay

Calls for minimum wage increases have become increasingly common in recent years, as campaigns, such as the “Fight for $15” garner national attention, including the support of major political figures such as Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT). Many advocates also argue that state and federal minimum wages should be extended to tipped workers as well. These workers – including waiters, bartenders, and other tipped employees – fall under a separate, often lower minimum wage, sometimes called the “tipped minimum cash wage.” Employers of tipped workers must pay their employees a minimum hourly cash wage, which, when added to an employee's average hourly tipped income (“tip credit”), sums to at least the non-tipped minimum wage. As of August 2018, the Federal minimum cash wage for tipped employees was $2.13 per hour and the minimum wage paid to non-tipped employees was $7.25 per hour.

Tipped workers account for approximately 2.7 percent of the total workforce in the United States. Compared to the overall workforce, they are more likely to be living in poverty. Approximately 1 in 5 tipped workers live in families with incomes below the Federal Poverty Line, and an additional 1 in 5 tipped workers live in families with incomes that fall between one and two times this level. Advocates of raising the tipped minimum cash wage argue that such a policy strategy may be effective at reducing poverty because it will raise the earnings of workers in poor families. However, increases in the tipped minimum cash wage raise the costs of low-skilled labor to employers of tipped workers. Thus, minimum cash wage-induced adverse employment or hours effects could undermine total cash wage gains by workers living in poor families. In addition, minimum cash wage increases may also affect consumer tipping and employer tip pooling. These general equilibrium effects may negatively impact total labor earnings that workers receive, thus undermining family income gains and muting poverty-alleviating effects.

A new study published in *Industrial Relations*, co-authored by CHEPS affiliate Taylor Mackay, is the first to estimate the impact of state tipped minimum cash wage increases on poverty. Using data from the Current Population Survey, these authors find that tipped minimum cash wage increases are associated with declines in the risk of a tipped restaurant worker living in a poor family. However, they find little evidence of poverty-alleviating effects when using the household rather than the family as the sharing unit. This result is consistent with evidence that a substantial share of tipped workers who live in a poor family live in a non-poor household with persons unrelated by blood, marriage, or adoption, who contribute to the household’s income.

In addition, the gains to some low-income tipped workers are offset by income losses by other tipped workers, consistent with the economist’s old axiom “there is no such thing as a free lunch.” The authors find that younger, less-educated individuals experience an uptick in their probability of living in poverty following increases to the tipped minimum wage due to adverse employment effects. Thus, the costs and benefits of minimum wage increases must be weighed against one another to assess their overall impact. In the aggregate, they find that these two effects offset one another, as increases to tipped minimum wages have no statistically significant effect on the overall poverty rates of working-age individuals. These results suggest that raising the minimum wage for tipped employees is not an effective way to raise the incomes of poor workers.

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> *Raising the minimum wage for tipped employees is not an effective way to raise incomes of poor workers.*

SMOKE GETS IN YOUR EYES: MEDICAL MARIJUANA LAWS AND TOBACCO USE

Anna Choi (University of Southern California), Dhaval Dave (Bentley University, NBER & IZA), and Joseph J. Sabia (San Diego State University, University of New Hampshire & IZA)

In a forthcoming paper in the *American Journal of Health Economics,* Center for Health Economics and Policy Studies (CHEPS) affiliates examine the impacts of medical marijuana laws on tobacco cigarette use.

Medical Marijuana Laws (MMLs) legalize the possession, use, and cultivation of marijuana for allowable medicinal purposes such as chronic pain, anxiety, and the side effects of cancer and HIV treatments. While a growing body of evidence suggests that MMLs have increased consumption of marijuana, the increase in use appears to be not only for medicinal purposes, but also for recreational use. This has occurred, in part, due to supply-side spillovers to the recreational market. Could medical marijuana laws have other spillovers on consumption of substances that are complements or substitutes for marijuana?

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The Impact of Nurse Turnover on Quality of Care and Mortality in Nursing Homes: Evidence from the Great Recession
Yaa Akosa Antwi and John R. Bowblis

The Effect of Alcohol Access on Sexually Transmitted Diseases: Evidence From the Minimum Legal Drinking Age
Vijetha Koppa

The Impact of Maternal Mental Health Shocks on Child Health: Estimates from Fixed-Effects Instrumental Variables Models for Two Cohorts of Australian Children
Huong Thu Le and Ha Trong Nguyen

Physician Competition and the Provision of Care: Evidence from Heart Attacks
Abe Dunn and Adam Hale Shapiro

Official Journal of the American Society of Health Economists

mitpressjournals.org/ajhe

Each year nearly half a million individuals die from smoking related causes. Tobacco smoking is causally linked to substantial increases in the risks of cancers of the liver, head, and neck. In addition, secondhand smoke claims many more lives by increasing probability of stroke and death from cardiovascular disease for those in proximity of smokers. In total, it is estimated that cigarette smoking leads to over $180 billion in additional health care costs per year. Thus, if medicinal marijuana is indeed a substitute for tobacco, MMLs could substantially lower total public health costs.

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> *Medical marijuana laws induce tobacco-related cost savings of $4.6 to 6.9 billion per year.*

In sharp contrast to tobacco, the public health costs of marijuana use are much smaller. While there is some evidence that marijuana consumption is associated with poor respiratory symptoms and chronic bronchitis, there is much less evidence linking marijuana use to cancer or heart disease. Moreover, marijuana use is linked to far lower risks of mortality and morbidity, especially due to cancers, and even has some documented health benefits such as its use to treat rheumatoid arthritis, fibromyalgia, neuropathic pain, and to mitigate the side effects of certain cancer drugs. Thus, policies that induce consumers to substitute away from tobacco and toward marijuana have the potential to generate important public health benefits.

Drs. Anna Choi (University of Southern California), Dhaval Dave (Bentley University), and Joseph J. Sabia (San Diego State University) are the first to explore the impact of MMLs on tobacco cigarette use. Drawing on data from the National Survey of Drug Use and Health, the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey, and the Current Population Survey Tobacco Use Supplement from 1990 to 2015, while exploiting variation in the timing of MML enactment across states, the authors find that MMLs are associated with a 1 to 1.5 percent decrease in adult tobacco consumption, consistent with the hypothesis that tobacco and marijuana are substitutes. The authors conclude that MMLs induce tobacco-related cost savings of $4.6 to 6.9 billion per year. This important paper adds to a growing body of literature suggesting that there may be important health benefits of medical marijuana laws.

WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM MY FRIENDS. A NEW STUDY EXAMINES THE EFFECTS OF GOOD SAMARITAN AND NALOXONE ACCESS LAWS ON OPIOID-RELATED DEATHS

Daniel I. Rees (University of Colorado Denver & IZA), Joseph J. Sabia (San Diego State University, University of New Hampshire & IZA), Laura M. Argys (University of Colorado Denver & IZA), Dhaval Dave (Bentley University & NBER), and Joshua Latshaw (San Diego State University)

In a new study conditionally accepted for publication at *The Journal of Law and Economics*, Center for Health Economics & Policy Studies (CHEPS) affiliates investigate the impact of Good Samaritan and Naloxone Access Laws on opioid-related deaths.

Drug overdoses in the United States have risen dramatically over the last two decades, with overdose deaths now occurring at more than twice the rate as in the early 2000s. Opioid-related overdoses are driving what the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have called “the worst drug overdose epidemic” in American history. More than 60 percent of overdose deaths involve opioids – primarily prescription painkillers and heroin.

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> *Naloxone access laws are associated with a 9 to 10 percent drop in opioid-related mortality.*

In an effort to address this public policy crisis, a majority of states have adopted Good Samaritan Laws (GSLs) and Naloxone Access Laws (NALs). GSLs, adopted by 40 states plus the District of Columbia, offer legal protections to anyone providing assistance to a person who is injured or experiencing a drug-related overdose. Every state and the District of Columbia have enacted NALs, which allow laypersons to administer or distribute naloxone, a medication that counteracts the impact of an opioid overdose, without fear of legal repercussions. While GSLs and NALs enjoy broad support from policymakers and the medical and public health communities, until now there had been little evidence as to their impact in combating drug overdoses.

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The study is the first to examine the effects of NALs and GSLs on opioid-related mortality. Using state-by-year data on opioid-related deaths from the National Vital Statistics System (NVSS) for the period 1999-2014, the authors find that NALs are associated with a 9 to 10 percent drop in opioid-related mortality. Additionally, they find that this effect was primarily driven by a few early adopting states – New Mexico, Connecticut, California, Illinois, and Washington. In these states, NAL adoption is associated with an 8 to 30 percent drop in opioid-related mortality. Later-adopting states saw no change or even an increase in opioid-related mortality following the enactment of NALs, and it remains to be seen whether they will experience the decrease observed among the “early adopters” in the long run. The authors also find that GSLs are negatively related to opioid-related mortality, but the effects are generally not statistically distinguishable from zero at conventional levels.

The research team thanks Zach Fone, Travis Freidman, Thanh Tam Nguyen, and Dana George for excellent research assistance on this project.

THE IMPACT OF SAME-SEX RELATIONSHIPS ON WAGES AND HEALTH DYNAMICS: EVIDENCE FROM AUSTRALIA

Thanh Tam Nguyen (PhD candidate, University of New Hampshire), Mark Wooden (Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research, University of Melbourne and IZA), and Joseph J. Sabia (San Diego State University, University of New Hampshire & IZA)

This past year, CHEPS Doctoral Affiliate Tam Nguyen published two studies examining the effect of sexual identity and same-sex-relationships on health and labor market dynamics. These research papers made use of a novel nationally representative longitudinal dataset that recently began asking respondents about their sexual identity. The first paper appeared in the *Southern Economic Journal.* Tam and her co-authors provided the first nationally representative estimates of the effect of sexual identity on earnings in Australia as well as the impact of same-sex relationship formation (and dissolution) on labor market dynamics. Tam and her co-authors use data from the Household, Income, and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) survey and find that gay males in Australia are less likely to participate in the labor force. They also find that gay employed males earn 16 to 21 percent less than their heterosexual counterparts. Their novel use of longitudinal data finds that this wage gap can be explained, in part by differential wage growth. In sharp contrast, the authors find consistent evidence of a wage premium for lesbians, largely driven by greater work intensity. An examination of partnership formation and dissolution again points to evidence that same-sex relationships are associated with wage declines among gay men. These results are consistent with both labor market discrimination and, possibly, household specialization.

In a second paper published in *Economics and Human Biology*, Tam and her co-authors again use the HILDA data to study the impact of same-sex relationships on health dynamics of Australians. First, they find that sexual minorities in Australia are more likely to engage in risky health behaviors and report worse health than their heterosexual counterparts. Then, after accounting for selection into relationships -- using a technique pioneered by Drs. Susan Averett and Jennifer Kohn in a *Journal of Health Economics* article -- they find that opposite-sex partnerships, particularly marriages, lead to a 3 to 7 percentage-point decline in risky health behaviors and an improvement in physical and mental health. However, they find no evidence that same-sex partnerships conferred similar health benefits for sexual minorities. This result could be reflective of discrimination against sexual minorities that increase household stress and diminish health or reflect differential selection into relationships for same- and opposite-sex couples. Finally, the findings could suggest that the lack of same-sex marriage protections in Australia during the period under study (such protections were passed into law December 2017) inhibited marriage-induced health benefits. Together, these important studies underscore the scientific knowledge created when data on sexual identity are collected in nationally representative longitudinal datasets.

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> *Gay males are less likely to participate in the labor force and earn 16% to 21% less than their heterosexual counterparts.*

ARE MINIMUM WAGES A SILENT KILLER?

Joseph J. Sabia (San Diego State University, University of New Hampshire & IZA), Melinda Pitts (Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta), and Laura Argys (University of Colorado Denver & IZA)

A new study forthcoming in *The Review of Economics and Statistics*, co-authored by Melinda Pitts (Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta), Laura Argys (University of Colorado Denver), and Joseph J. Sabia (San Diego State University), examines the relationship between minimum wage increases and teen alcohol-related fatal accidents. Why might we expect such a link? A prior paper by Scott Adams, McKinley Blackburn, and Chad Cotti (ABC) found that state minimum wage increases between 1998 and 2006 were associated with substantial increases in alcohol-related traffic fatalities among those ages 16-to-20. These authors posited that minimum wage hikes increased the income of teens, leading to more alcohol consumption, more drunk driving, and more alcohol-related traffic fatalities. But Sabia, Pitts, and Argys find that it is too soon to conclude that minimum wage increases result in teen deaths. In their forthcoming *Review of Economics and Statistics* piece, they conclude:

> *We re-investigate ABC's result [using Fatality Accident Reporting System data] and find that when the initial analysis period is expanded to the years 1991 through 2013, there is no evidence that minimum wage increases affected teen alcohol-related fatal accidents. Auxiliary analyses of data from the Current Population Surveys (CPS), Youth Risk Behavior Surveys (YRBS), and Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Surveys (BRFSS) provide no support for income-driven increases in alcohol consumption, the primary mechanism posited by ABC. In fact, our results suggest that minimum wage increases are associated with modest declines in teen alcohol consumption, perhaps due to a reduction in employment. Together, our results suggest that minimum wage increases are not a silent killer.*

Drs. Sabia, Pitts, and Argys conclude that while minimum wages may have a number of unintended consequences – including adverse employment effects among low-skilled workers, poor target efficiency to the working poor, and increases in poverty for some vulnerable workers — alcohol-related teen deaths are probably not among them.

The authors of this new study thank CHEPS graduate affiliates Thanh Tam Nguyen, Brittany Bass, and Timothy Young for their excellent research assistance at various stages of this project.

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Over the years 1991 through 2013, there is no evidence that minimum wage increases affected teen alcohol-related fatal accidents.

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DO MEDICAL MARIJUANA LAWS ADVERSELY AFFECT LABOR MARKET SUCCESS?

Thanh Tam Nguyen (PhD candidate, University of New Hampshire) and Joseph J. Sabia (San Diego State University, University of New Hampshire & IZA)

In a forthcoming paper in *The Journal of Law and Economics*, "The Effect of Medical Marijuana Laws on Labor Market Outcomes," Joseph J. Sabia (San Diego State University) and Tam Nguyen (University of New Hampshire) examine the effects of state medical marijuana laws (MMLs) on labor force participation and wages. While a number of studies have examined the health effects of medical marijuana laws, this study is the very first to explore the labor market effects of these reforms.

MMLs, which legalize the possession, use, and cultivation of marijuana for allowable medicinal purposes, have been implemented in 29 states and the District of Columbia. Prior research has found that the enactment of MMLs is associated with increases in marijuana consumption among adults, both for medicinal purposes and also due to spillovers to the recreational market.

Theory suggests that the effects of MMLs on labor market outcomes are a priori unclear. Some research shows that increased marijuana use, especially heavy use, is associated with amotivational syndrome, poorer psychological health, increased lethargy, diminished cognition, and greater impatience in decision-making. Each of these impacts could decrease attachment to the labor force and reduce wages. On the other hand, MML-induced marijuana consumption among individuals with physical or mental health ailments may help to treat conditions that impede work or inhibit productivity. Moreover, easier availability of marijuana may cause substitution away from medications with side effects that may impede work, such as opioids and antidepressants. Finally, the legalization of marijuana for medicinal purposes may also open up new (legal) jobs in marijuana sales. If these pathways dominate, then MMLs could increase employment and wages.

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> *Concerns that medical marijuana laws might decrease attachment to the labor force or harm productivity appear to be largely unfounded.*

Using data from the Current Population Survey Outgoing Rotation Groups, Sabia and Nguyen find that the enactment of MMLs has little effect on employment, hours worked or hourly wages for both men and women across the age distribution. Thus, concerns that MMLs might decrease attachment to the labor force or harm productivity appear to be largely unfounded. However, the authors do find that the opening of dispensaries, in conjunction with MMLs, may result in small declines in wages for young adult males in their 20s (consistent with heavier recreational use), but small increases in employment for older adult males over age 40 (consistent with effective medicinal use). The authors conclude that the labor market effects of MMLs are, in the main, quite small. Future research exploring the impacts of the "full" legalization of marijuana for recreational use will provide an important new piece of the puzzle on the labor market effects of MMLs.

WAR! WHAT IS IT GOOD FOR? NEW EVIDENCE FROM U.S. ARMY ADMINISTRATIVE DATA

Joseph J. Sabia (San Diego State University, University of New Hampshire & IZA) and William Skimmyhorn (U.S. Military Academy, West Point and College of William and Mary)

In an upcoming paper in the *Economic Self-Sufficiency Policy Research Institute (ESSPRI) Working Paper Series*, authors Joseph J. Sabia (San Diego State University) and William Skimmyhorn (College of William and Mary) study the impact of combat service in the Global War on Terror (GWOT) on Veterans Disabilities Compensation (VDC) use, take-up of the Post-9/11 GI Bill, educational attainment, and use of the Unemployment Compensation for Ex-Servicemembers (UCX) program.

In a first-of-its-kind study, Drs. Sabia and Skimmyhorn examine the impact of war deployments on the economic transitions of separating veterans. They exploit a "natural experiment" in Army deployments - relying on the process by which Army Human Resources Command conditionally randomly assigns soldiers to their deployment duties - to identify the causal impact of war on economic well-being. They are also able to measure unit-level combat exposure, including deaths and injuries to each soldier's unit, to identify the economic impact of high intensity combat exposure.

The paper leverages highly sensitive administrative data from the Office of Economic and Manpower Analysis at the U.S. Military Academy to construct a dataset that includes a longitudinal census of enlisted soldiers from 2001-2016 – covering the GWOT era, including Operations Enduring Freedom (Afghanistan) and Iraqi Freedom (Iraq). This dataset amounts to detailed histories of roughly one million soldiers, including military service records and consumption of veterans' benefits.

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> *Combat exposure reduces the post-separation educational attainment by 4 to 10 percent.*

Sabia and Skimmyhorn find that the significant increases in separating soldiers' reliance on Veterans' Disability Compensation (VDC) benefits for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), as well as Unemployment Compensation for Ex-Servicemembers (UCX) benefits are driven by combat exposure.

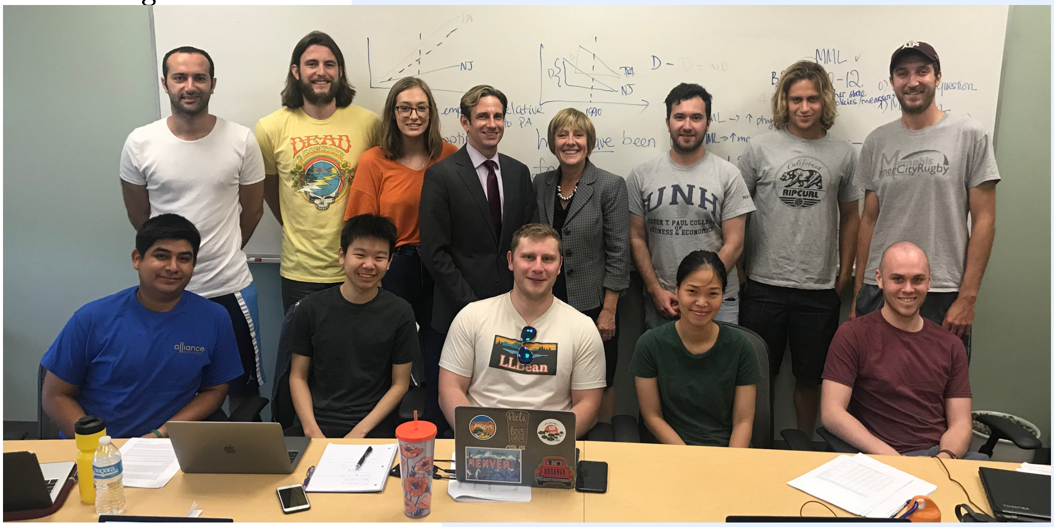
"The magnitudes of these effects are large and, coupled with the lifetime cost of treating PTSD and TBI, create substantial additional medical costs for taxpayers. Back-of-the-envelope estimates suggest the additional costs of PTSD and TBI to be almost $40 billion and $20 billion, respectively," Sabia said. They also find a reduction in educational attainment among separating service members exposed to combat. Combat exposure reduces educational attainment during enlistment by 20 to 25 percent and reduces the post-separation probability of ever attaining a four-year degree by 4 to 10 percent. These findings are critical for policymakers wishing to design effective Transition Assistance Programs (TAP) to effectively transition at-risk soldiers to civilian life.

STATA WORKSHOP

In August 2017, CHEPS organized a small three-day workshop to teach incoming MA student research affiliates the basics of Stata, the statistical software package most commonly used by applied microeconomists. The pilot program was led by SDSU alumna and current University of New Hampshire Doctoral Candidate (and CHEPS Doctoral Affiliate) Tam Nguyen and attended by SDSU MA Economics students Andrew Dickinson, Toshio Ferrazares, Niranjana Prasad and Nick Ozanich. The workshop was a success, owed to the content's applications to CHEPS empirical research projects during the 2017-18 Academic Year as well as graduate econometrics coursework.

As part of the workshop, students worked with a number of large national datasets, including the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) collected by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The YRBS is a biannual survey of high school students that collects information about risky behaviors such as violence, drug use, sexual behavior, physical health, diet, smoking, and exercise. They also used the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), a telephone survey also conducted by the CDC that collects information on over 400,000 adults from all 50 states (and the District of Columbia) each year on health related topics, health history, and risky behaviors. Students also learned about a number of datasets provided by the Census Bureau, including the Current Population Survey and the Survey of Income and Program Participation. Finally, students were introduced to a number of crime-related surveys including the National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS) data and the Uniform Crime Reports (UCR).

Students learned to carefully write and document Stata .do files, deal with missing or miscoded data, create summary tables and figures, and both append and merge data. In addition, they worked with economic interpretations of results, with both linear regression analysis and non-linear models such as probit and logit.



Top L-R:
Emre Yuksel,
Andrew Dickinson,
Alicia Marquez,
Joseph Sabia,
Dean Norma Bouchard,
Gokhan Kumpas,
Sabastian Johnson,
Calvin Bryan

Bottom L-R:
Sergio Cisneros,
Kevin Hsu, Ben Brewer,
Tam Nguyen, Alexander
Vornsand

In response to the success of the 2017 pilot program, the August 2018 Stata workshop was extended to a six day intensive Stata Boot Camp. New topics on this year's Boot Camp agenda included deeper dives into organization and cleaning of longitudinal datasets and an introduction to difference-in-difference estimation and event study analysis, commonly used in policy analysis. Students were also given more detailed data projects to complete on their own and were required to present their findings in a final empirical project.

While these Stata workshops draw mostly first-year MA students, Dr. Sabia's second-year research assistants (RAs) who have not been through the program are required to attend. August 2018 Boot Camp participants included Calvin Bryan, Alicia Marquez, Kevin Hsu, Emre Yuksel, Alexander Vornsand, Sergio Cisneros and Kyutaro Matsuzawa. Zach Fone, Andrew Dickinson, Nick Ozanich, and Toshio Ferrazares were also on hand to provide assistance to the new cohort. As the first CHEPS event of the new academic year, the Boot Camp served as a de-facto orientation, bringing the new cohort of research-active students together and introducing them to veterans of the Center.

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

PROFESSOR BRANDY LIPTON

Dr. Brandy Lipton is an applied microeconomist specializing in health economics and public policy. Her core interests lie in exploring the connections between health care policies and both health and economic outcomes. The majority of her work leverages state-level variation in Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program policies. For example, recent research has explored the effects of optional benefits in Medicaid on adult health and labor market outcomes. Ongoing work is examining whether adult Medicaid benefits affect outcomes among children of adult enrollees.

Dr. Lipton received a BA in mathematics and economics from Colby College and a PhD in economics from Northwestern University. Her graduate studies were concentrated in labor economics, with her dissertation work examining how the use of different job search methods affect wages and the theoretical underpinnings of the observed empirical patterns. Her doctoral studies were supervised by Dale Mortensen, a recipient of the 2010 Nobel Prize in Economics.

After completing her graduate studies, Dr. Lipton spent several years working for the federal government. During this time, she conducted research for the National Center for Health Statistics and the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. Her work involved analysis of nationally representative household surveys fielded by these agencies to address a variety of health and public policy topics. This work was published in high quality peer-reviewed economics and policy journals including the *Journal of Health Economics* and *Health Affairs*.

Dr. Lipton joined San Diego State University's Health Management and Policy division within the Graduate School of Public Health in August 2017. During her time at SDSU, she has received two research grants as PI or Co-PI from the William T. Grant Foundation. This funding supports research during calendar year 2018 to study the effects of improving access to dental care among parents on dental visits and related outcomes among children by leveraging state-level changes to Medicaid adult dental coverage policies over time. A second project funded for 2018-2021 will examine how access to school-based health services (i.e., school screening mandates and school-based health centers) affects academic and socio-behavioral outcomes among children. In addition to her funded work, Dr. Lipton is also interested in exploring the connections between policies that promote oral health and systemic health outcomes, as well as the link between health policy and criminal activity.

Since joining SDSU, Dr. Lipton has been an active participant in the Center for Health Economics and Policy Studies (CHEPS) seminar series. She also sits on the advisory board for the Center and has interacted extensively with several of the student affiliates. The establishment of CHEPS has unified a diverse set of researchers interested in health economics and policy, encouraged new collaborations between faculty and student researchers and enhanced the scholarly environment at SDSU. The seminar series also provides exposure to new ideas and the opportunity to interact with high profile researchers from other institutions. As a new faculty member, these interactions with internal and external researchers have been extremely valuable to the continued development of Dr. Lipton's research agenda and network.

PROFESSOR AUDREY BECK

Audrey Beck is an Assistant Professor of Sociology at San Diego State University. She received her B.A. from the University of California-Los Angeles and her PhD in sociology with specializations in demography and stratification from Duke University. Her dissertation focused on the ecological determinants of spousal choice while other research, with colleagues from the Sanford School of Public Policy, focused on peer influence and racial disparities in educational outcomes. Additional graduate work, later published in the *American Journal of Epidemiology*, examined the relationship between marital trajectories and mortality. While at Duke she was selected for a Spencer Foundation Doctoral Training Fellowship as well as the Program for Advanced Research in the Social Sciences Graduate Fellowship.

Following graduation, she was a postdoctoral fellow in the Office of Population Research and Center for Research on Child Wellbeing at Princeton University. While there, her primary focus was the impact of union formation and dissolution on child health, parenting, and child school readiness. She also received the Jacobs Foundation Young Scholars Grant for an examination of the living arrangements of migrant youth across six developed countries.

She first came to San Diego State University as a postdoctoral research associate before joining the Sociology Department as an Assistant Professor in 2015. Her work uses a variety of demographic methods to understand race, ethnic and nativity disparities in health. One area of research employs cross-classified random effects models to understand the age, period, and cohort (APC) patterns of health disparities and the “long arm” of childhood conditions on adult health. Much of this research capitalizes on a unique dataset of nine waves of the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey that she and colleagues normalized to ensure consistent coding.

A secondary area of research examines health and wellbeing among children and adolescents in disadvantaged populations. With colleagues at UCSD, she examines the correlates of psychological health (e.g. PTSD, complicated grief) and physical health among incarcerated youth in San Diego. A recent article finds high levels of cumulative adversity among delinquent girls; these adversity experiences are diverse and often impart severe impairment. This work highlights the inadequacy of extant diagnostic and treatment systems for delinquents and suggests specific areas for policy intervention.

Dr. Beck has published her work in *Demography*, *Social Science and Medicine*, *Journal of Gerontology*, *Social Science Quarterly*, *American Journal of Public Health*, *Sociology of Education*, and the *Journal of Marriage and Family*, among others. She has taught a number of courses including Sociology of Health and Illness, Survey Methods, Population Studies, the American Family, as well as Introductory, Intermediate, and Advanced Statistics.

Dr. Beck has been regularly attending the Center for Health Economics and Policy Studies seminar series and meeting with speakers; the Center has provided an invaluable interdisciplinary environment, revitalizing her policy focus. She looks forward to sharing her recent work, with colleagues at USC, which explores a) the impact of neighborhood economic conditions and crime on birth outcomes and b) the collection of police-involved death data and the contextual and policy correlates of such deaths. She will present the latter work in the Fall 2018 Center for Health Economics and Policy Studies lecture series.

SEMINAR SERIES

In its inaugural year, CHEPS hosted its first Research Seminar Series that brought 20 economists to SDSU to present their scholarship. These labor, health, and public economists visited CHEPS from such institutions as California Polytechnic State University at San Luis Obispo, University of Melbourne, University of New Hampshire, Rider University, University of Oregon, Louisiana State University, Montana State University, United States Military Academy, University of Colorado Denver, and a number of University of California campuses (Davis, San Diego, Riverside, and Irvine). Speakers included a mix of junior and senior faculty members.

Weekly seminars were attended by CHEPS affiliates, professors from across disciplines, and undergraduate and graduate students. These events helped expand the research interests of students and allowed economics professors at SDSU to network with faculty from other universities. Importantly, CHEPS affiliates were able to meet with presenters in small group sessions to discuss their research and academic experiences, as well as seek advice about their future careers. Several invited speakers discussed the relative quality of various U.S. Economics PhD programs with students and gave advice on how to select the best match. Networking opportunities for students were invaluable.

The Research Seminar Series brought a number of interesting working papers to campus. Andrew Friedson from the University of Colorado Denver presented “The Affordable Care Act and Ambulance Response Times.” This study explored the effect of expansion of medical insurance caused by the Affordable Care Act on the response time of ambulances. Dr. Friedson and his co-authors find evidence of an increase in response times after expansion of insurance coverage, suggesting an important unintended consequence of the reform was to increase the use of emergency medical services.

Another seminar, “How did the Affordable Care Act Impact Army Reenlistment?” by Dr. Michael Kofoed from the United States Military Academy (West Point) examined the impact of the Affordable Care Act’s dependent care provision on “job lock” among those in the U.S. Army. After passage of the ACA, Americans under the age of 27 were able to remain on their parents' health insurance and do not require their employer, or the military, to provide them with health insurance. Dr. Kofoed finds that the dependent coverage mandate reduced the probability of Army reenlistment by 2.7 percentage points.

In “Let's Talk About Sex Education,” Brittany Bass, a candidate for a PhD at the University of California-Irvine and an alumna of San Diego State University’s Economics Master program, explored the impact of state mandated sex education programs on risky behaviors. She found that the enactment of sex education mandates were associated with an increase in contraceptive use and a decline in sexually transmitted infections (STI). Another talk, “Equal but Inequitable: Who Benefits from Gender-Neutral Tenure Clock Stopping Policies?” from Dr. Jenna Stearns of the University of California-Davis found that the adoption of gender-neutral tenure clock stopping policies reduced female tenure rates and substantially increased male tenure rates.

The coming year will bring a new set of highly regarded scholars (see p.16). Exposure to cutting edge research from newly published - and soon-to-be published - works is a vital part of the CHEPS mission. Bringing high quality researchers to present their scholarship stimulates academic debate among professors and students and strengthens the intellectual environment at SDSU.

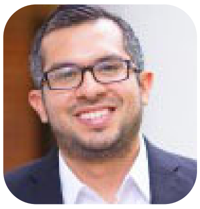
FALL 2018 RESEARCH SEMINAR SERIES

THURSDAYS 3:30 PM - 4:45 PM

FINCH CONFERENCE ROOM (AL 660)

AUGUST 30

Dean Lillard
The Ohio State University
“Information and Safe Sex: Are Better Informed Youth More Likely to Use Contraceptives & Condoms?"



SEPTEMBER 6

Sebastian Tello-Trillo
University of Virginia
“Losing Public Health Insurance: TennCare Disenrollment and Personal Financial Distress”

SEPTEMBER 13

Corey White
Cal Poly–San Luis Obispo
“Measuring Social and Externality Benefits of Influenza Vaccination”

SEPTEMBER 27

Delia Furtado
University of Connecticut
“Do Immigrant Inflows Improve Quality of Care in Nursing Homes?”

OCTOBER 4

Hani Mansour
University of Colorado-Denver
“The Labor Market Effects of Immigration Enforcement”

OCTOBER 11

Sara Markowitz
Emory University
“Scope of Practice Laws: The Most Influential Health Care Laws You’ve Never Heard Of”

OCTOBER 18

Chris Herbst
Arizona State University
“Who's Minding the Kids? Experimental Evidence on the Demand for Child Care Quality”

OCTOBER 25

Xiaoxue Li
University of New Mexico
“Quality Information Disclosure and Health Insurance Demand: Evidence from VA Hospital Report Cards”

NOVEMBER 1

David Neumark
University of California-Irvine
“The Long-Run Effects of the Earned Income Tax Credit on Women’s Earnings”

NOVEMBER 15

Alice Chen
University of Southern California
Health Economics; Public Policy
“Physician Fraud Deterrence”

NOVEMBER 29

David Bradford
University of Georgia
“Eviction and Opioid Mortality in the United States”

DECEMBER 6

Audrey Beck
San Diego State University
“Using Crowd-Sourced Data to Explore Police-Related-Deaths in the United States”

MORE INFO AT HTTPS://CHEPS.SDSU.EDU

RESEARCHERS NEVER RETIRE

ROGER FRANTZ

Roger Frantz considers himself a member of the “un-retired.” He has a contract with Elsevier Publishing to write a book on the beginnings of behavioral economics, before the groundbreaking work of Kahneman and Tversky in the mid-1970s. With his friend and colleague Leslie Marsh of the School of Medicine at the University of British Columbia, Roger is writing a book on Frederick Hayek’s Austrian economics perspective on behavioral economics.

Roger is the Founding Editor for the *Journal of Behavioral Economics for Policy*, which will publish Volume 2, Issue 2 of the journal in September 2018. He recently stepped aside as Editor-in-Chief, leaving the journal to the very capable, Michelle Baddeley, Director, and Research Professor at the Institute for Choice at the University of South Australia. Roger will now serve as Special Issues editor giving an outlet for all of the heterodox elements of behavioral economics.

Roger’s past work has prepared him well for (un)retirement. His 1978 doctoral dissertation, written under the guidance of Duane Leigh at Washington State University, found that a young man’s attitudes towards the causes of labor market success predicts labor market success as they transition from school to work. He joined the faculty at SDSU in 1978 and has been here since. In 1982-83 he was a Visiting Scholar in Economics and Social Science at Harvard University as he worked with his mentor Professor Harvey Leibenstein. Roger has published articles in many impressive journals including the *American Economic Review* (Papers and Proceedings), *Economics and Philosophy*, the *Southern Economic Journal*, and *Public Choice*. He has written or edited six books. He was President of the Society for the Advancement of Behavioral Economics and an Editor of Behavioral Economics. Having fully (un)retired in 2017, Roger was rehired by SDSU’s Department of Psychology to teach behavioral economics.

SHOSHANA GROSSBARD

Since the end of her last course, Shoshana Grossbard has been more active than ever. She gave the opening keynote lecture at the second annual meetings of the Society of Economics of the Household (SEHO) at the Paris School of Economics in May. It is an organization she founded in 2017. She is in charge of the scientific program of the 2019 SEHO meetings to be held in Lisbon, Portugal. She continues to be editor-in-chief of the *Review of Economics of the Household* (REHO), the journal that she founded and that is published by Springer/Nature. The journal is increasingly influential, having reached an impact factor of 1.33 and being ranked in the top tier of economics journals. In the last year Shoshana has had articles published or accepted for publication in the *Journal of Empirical Legal Studies*, the *Routledge Handbook of the History of Women’s Economic Thought*, the *Review of Development Economics*, the *Oxford Handbook on the Economics of Women*, and the *IZA Journal of Labor Economics*.

In the coming months Shoshana will be giving invited lectures at Jinan University in China and at the Academia Sinica as well as present her current work on gender and citations in economics journals at the Southern Economics Meetings in Washington D.C. and the American Economics Meetings in Atlanta. She is also active in mentoring young faculty and PhD students. This January, for the third time she will be a mentor in the *CSWEP CeMENT* workshop for faculty in doctoral programs aimed at mentoring female faculty in tenure-track positions at PhD granting economics departments. She is mentoring a Fulbright scholar from Morocco at SDSU this year and regularly attends the CHEPS seminars organized by Dr. Sabia. Shoshana received her PhD in Economics from the University of Chicago, is a Research Affiliate at the Institute for Labor Economics, and is the author of 79 articles and 7 books. She tweets @econoflove where she has close to 4300 followers.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

ANDREW DICKINSON

Economist in Training

Andrew Dickinson started participating as a graduate student affiliate at CHEPS in Fall of 2017. After completing a bachelor's degree in economics at San Diego State University, he returned to SDSU as a master's student in the economics department to further his understanding and develop valuable research skills.

As a research assistant at the Center, Andrew has supplemented his graduate curriculum with formal research training while under the mentorship of Dr. Sabia. Throughout his first year, he has made contributions to a number of projects. He spent several months providing research assistance on a project that identifies the effect of gun buyback programs on local crime using the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) crime dataset. Currently, Andrew is actively assisting a project examining the effect of specific immigration policies on crime. In addition to taking an active role in research, Andrew has benefited from a variety of additional opportunities provided by CHEPS such as weekly seminar presentations of original research, conference travel funding and networking opportunities from visiting scholars.

Andrew plans to continue his graduate education and will be applying to PhD programs during the next application cycle this Fall. Reflecting over the past year, he believes that his time working as a CHEPS affiliate will be the start to a long career in economic research.

TOSHIO FERRAZARES

Model Affiliate Plans for PhD Program

Toshio Ferrazares is a research assistant working at the Center for Health Economics and Policy Studies (CHEPS), and a master's student in economics at San Diego State University (SDSU). Now entering his second year of both his academic program and his role at CHEPS, Toshio has both garnered a greater understanding of economic theory and practice, and has amassed considerable research experience under the direction of Dr. Sabia.

While at CHEPS, Toshio has contributed to several projects including a study of veteran's benefits and a paper investigating Naloxone access. However, for more than six months, he has been immersed in a study identifying the impacts of gun buyback programs on crime. Working with the notoriously difficult National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) dataset, he has taken a deep dive into some of the challenges of academic research. Undeterred, Toshio plans to carry this experience into a PhD program in economics and is preparing his application for the upcoming cycle.

BRANDYN CHURCHILL

From San Diego to Vanderbilt

Though Brandyn was an Economics major throughout his undergraduate career at Washington and Lee University, it was not until the spring of his junior year that he began considering graduate school. Lacking the requisite math preparation to be competitive at the PhD level, Brandyn sought out MA programs in Economics which would allow him to overcome curricular shortcomings, as well as further develop his empirical research skills. With its opportunities for funding flexibility to take courses across other departments, and chance to work with faculty on academic work through what is now known as the Center for Health Economics and Policy Studies (CHEPS), the MA at San Diego State University was a perfect fit.

As a part of CHEPS, Brandyn benefited greatly from getting to read working research papers, as well as seeing original work presented at seminars and conferences. Along with a handful of other students, Brandyn would meet with Dr. Sabia each week to discuss progress on several projects related to employment outcomes and risky health behaviors. As he developed as a scholar, Brandyn's involvement with these projects progressed from basic copyediting, to data cleaning, and eventually co-authorship. For example, Brandyn and Dr. Sabia currently have a paper under review examining how minimum wage increases affect employment among low-skilled immigrants and how these effects vary across state-level immigration policies.

These opportunities exposed Brandyn to the research process, giving him confidence in his own academic ability. This in turn allowed him to intelligently discuss potential future work as part of his PhD application statement of purpose. Currently a rising third-year doctoral candidate in Economics at Vanderbilt University, Brandyn has begun work examining the relationship between employment verification programs (E-Verify) and crime, access to insurance and birth outcomes among the likely-unauthorized, and the role of higher education in the adoption of native health behaviors among immigrants. He is also an active member of the American Society of Health Economists, having participated in the 2018 mentorship program.

GOKHAN KUMPAS

Turkish Delight

Gokhan Kumpas is a PhD candidate in Economics at the University of New Hampshire (UNH). He received his BA in Economics at the Izmir University of Economics (Turkey) and his MA in Economics at UNH. He has been working closely with Dr. Sabia since the spring of 2017 and has been a student affiliate at CHEPS since August 2017.

As a CHEPS affiliate, Gokhan has been involved in several empirical projects that have provided him hands-on training in applied microeconomic research. In addition, he has had the opportunity to participate in and present at several conferences (2017 Southern Economic Association Meetings, 2018 Population Association of America Meetings, and 2018 Eastern Economic Association Meetings) across the nation. Participating in these conferences has helped him learn about the latest developments in the field and receive great feedback from important researchers. The CHEPS weekly research seminar series is another important building block in his PhD training, where he has been able to interact, learn, and get feedback from world renowned researchers.

After satisfying his PhD candidacy requirements at UNH, Gokhan relocated to San Diego to work closely with Dr. Sabia and be more involved in CHEPS. He is very excited to be in San Diego and to work closely with the rest of the CHEPS family.

ZACH FONE

New England State of Mind

Zach Fone began graduate studies in Economics at the University of New Hampshire in the Fall of 2015. He advanced to candidacy for his doctorate in the Summer of 2018 with a major field in Health Economics. Beginning in the Fall of 2016, he began working with Dr. Sabia as a Research Assistant and has been a CHEPS Doctoral Affiliate since the Center's inception in August 2017.

Being a CHEPS student research affiliate has given Zach many opportunities to grow as an empirical researcher. Through the weekly seminar series, which brings in prominent economists to present their innovative research. Zach has been able to further develop his research skills. Individual meetings with speakers have also been invaluable. CHEPS has also given him the ability to attend multiple research conferences, including the Southern Economic Association Annual Meetings, the Eastern Economic Association Annual Conference, and the Population Association of America Annual Meetings, to name a few. The conferences have been a great place for Zach to learn more about the ongoing research in economics and have provided him the opportunity to meet and chat with economists across the country.

As a Doctoral Affiliate in CHEPS, Zach has worked on numerous projects ranging from the effect of naloxone access laws on opioid-related deaths, to the effect of the Affordable Care Act's dependent coverage provision on crime. In working on these projects, Zach has gained intimate knowledge of novel empirical techniques such as the synthetic control method, while also learning to use large and complex datasets such as the Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) and the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS).

The main research project that Zach has been working on for some time seeks to answer the question of whether increases in minimum wage reduce crime. A Council of Economic Advisers report from the Spring of 2016 suggests that minimum wages may reduce crime, as fewer people will turn to illegal activity to make ends meet. However, adverse employment effects may reduce income among low-skilled workers, leading to more crime. Zach's research with Dr. Sabia will explore this important question during the course of the 2018-19 academic year.

A few months ago, Zach moved to San Diego to work more closely with Dr. Sabia and CHEPS. Zach is very grateful to faculty at the University of New Hampshire for their advice and support. He is very excited for the upcoming academic year to further develop his empirical skills, work on his dissertation, engage in the Seminar Series, and serve the mission of CHEPS. Zach is also thrilled for the opportunity to work for SDSU's Department of Economics as an instructor for an applied econometrics-related lab course that teaches MA students how to use Stata.

TAM NGUYEN

Doctoral Affiliate Makes Her Mark

Thanh Tam Nguyen is one of the most remarkable graduate students to emerge from CHEPS and the SDSU family. She is currently a third-year PhD student in Economics at the University of New Hampshire. She earned her BA and MA in economics at San Diego State University. Her research examines the effects of government policies on labor market outcomes, health outcomes, as well as risky behaviors and crime.

This past year, Tam's research has been published or accepted for publication in *The Journal of Law and Economics* ("The Effect of Medical Marijuana Laws on Labor Market Outcomes"), the *Southern Economic Journal* ("Sexual Identity, Same-Sex Relationships and Labor Market Dynamics: New Evidence from Longitudinal Data in Australia"), and *Economics and Human Biology* ("Sexual Identity, Same-Sex Relationships and Health Dynamics"). She has also had prior work on the impact of state physical education requirements accepted for publication in *Health Economics*.

As a member of CHEPS since its inception (as well as its predecessor, the Consortium for Research in Empirical Economics and Policy), Tam has been actively involved in multiple empirical research projects, attended conferences and participated in CHEPS weekly seminars. She and her fellow CHEPS Doctoral Affiliates presented their working papers at conferences, including the 2018 Eastern Economic Association meetings in Boston and the 2018 Population Association of America meetings in Denver. With the benefit of helpful comments, they will be able to improve their papers and advance their presentation skills. Tam also has had opportunities to network with prominent professors in the field. She was able to talk with CHEPS seminar speakers and received helpful input on her working papers, and advice regarding her experience as a PhD student and her future career goals. These experiences at CHEPS were extremely valuable for Tam as she works on her dissertation and prepares for a career in academia.

Tam is currently working on a number of projects. With coauthors Joseph J. Sabia, Taylor Mackay, and Dhaval M. Dave, her paper, "Do Ban the Box Laws Increase Crime?," is on the program at the 2018 European Association of Law and Economics meetings in Milan in September. She is also revising her paper co-authored with Dr. Sabia that examines the effects of minimum wages on public program receipt and spending. While several policymakers advocated higher minimum wages as potentially effective tools to reduce welfare dependency among the working poor, there has been little empirical evidence for this claim. They pooled data to various sources, including the Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) of the Current Population Survey (CPS), the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), and the National Income and Product Accounts (NIPA) and found that minimum wage increases are ineffective at reducing public-program participation. An earlier version of this paper is available as an Employment Policies Institute (EPI) working paper.

ALONA BILOKHA

Business Bound

Alona Bilokha worked at the Center for Health Economics and Policy Studies (CHEPS) during the 2017-2018 school year, where she gained significant research experience, developed her professional skills, and strengthened her application profile. She received her MA in Economics in May 2018, following a Bachelor's of Business Administration degree in Finance, with a minor in Economics, at Baruch College (CUNY).During her tenure at the Center, Alona spearheaded a study investigating same-sex marriage laws and adolescent mental health outcomes. She learned to navigate State and National Youth Risk Behavior Surveys from the period 1999 to 2015 and was able to successfully replicate a paper published on the topic in *The Journal of the American Medical Association: Pediatrics*. Carefully documented do files were then turned over to CHEPS Student Affiliates Kevin Hsu and Nick Ozanich, who have helped in extending the original *JAMA* work.

At CHEPS, Alona benefitted from Dr. Sabia's mentorship, as he coached her through the processes of selecting PhD programs and navigating her applications. Ultimately, she was admitted to several high-quality programs in Business, Public Policy, and Public Health, ensuring that she would be placed into the school that best fit her interests and aspirations. After much deliberation, she chose to enroll in the PhD program in Business at Fordham University.

Alona believes that her work at CHEPS was instrumental in her admission to a top-tier program. "I am grateful for all the research and networking opportunities that Dr. Sabia and CHEPS offered", Alona said. "They played a major role in my successful doctorate program application process." CHEPS could not be more proud of Alona's accomplishments and is thrilled to have her continue as a Doctoral Affiliate.

NIRANJANA PRASAD

Headed to the World Bank

Niranjana Prasad served as a graduate student affiliate at CHEPS during the 2017-2018 school year while completing her master's degree in economics and teaching undergraduate-level macroeconomics. While at the Center, Niranjana learned the critical thinking skills to undertake research projects and to work productively and independently. At the weekly meetings, she paired her formal schooling with exposure to original research to develop and expand her economic literacy. It was also at CHEPS that she was exposed to a diverse group of researchers presenting their scholarship at the weekly seminar series; these economic research presentations would ultimately inspire her pursuit of a PhD in the subject. Since completing her degree, Niranjana has taken a position at the World Bank in Washington, D.C., which has allowed her to apply her education and experience field research in developmental economics. In this effort, she has drawn heavily on the methodologies, programming skills, and data management skills she acquired at CHEPS through the various projects, seminars, and articles into which she was immersed. Niranjana said, "Not only did working at CHEPS teach me to collect and analyze data but also to report and communicate my findings in an interdisciplinary setting." She is currently on assignment in Tanzania, where she is evaluating the impact of access to public transit on the poor. She is also looking at how access to credit could influence socio-economic outcomes. While in East Africa, Niranjana will also be conducting data analytics for a Gender-Based Violence project in Tanzania and a Justice Reforms project in Kenya.

Niranjana attributes much of her current and future success to the solid foundation in economics and quantitative research that she constructed while at CHEPS. Dr. Sabia and his team, Niranjana said, helped her hone the skills that will ultimately set her apart in her future pursuits. "To me there remains no question that I am better at what I do because of the opportunities provided by CHEPS." Niranjana will be applying to PhD programs in economics for Fall 2019.

A RECORD OF SUCCESS

We take immense pride in the placement of our student affiliates. Over the last three years, SDSU MA Economics students working with Dr. Sabia and CHEPS have gone on to doctoral programs and research positions at the following institutions:

Fordham University, PhD, Business
North Carolina State University, PhD, Economics
University of California-Davis, PhD, Agricultural & Resource Economics
University of California-Irvine, PhD, Economics
University of California-Santa Barbara, PhD, Economics
University of New Hampshire, PhD Economics
University of New Mexico, PhD, Economics
Vanderbilt University, PhD, Economics
World Bank

ACADEMIC CONFERENCES

Attending academic conferences provides important opportunities for students and faculty to present their ongoing research, receive valuable feedback from discussants and session attendees, and hear exciting cutting edge presentations on important health and labor economics topics. Dr. Sabia and CHEPS students traveled to many conferences during the 2017-18 year to present their scholarship and to promote the scholarly reputation of CHEPS around the globe. Below you will find a list of conferences, research papers, and affiliates associated with Center travel during the period from September 2017 through July 2018. The 2018-19 year promises to be just as busy for CHEPS.

CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS ATTENDED

European Association of Law & Economics (EALE); London, UK; September, 2017

Economic Self-Sufficiency Policy Research Institute (ESSPRI) Workshop; Irvine, California; October, 2017

Hamburg Center for Health Economics (HCHE) Economics of Risky Health Behaviors Workshop; Hamburg, Germany; October, 2017

National Tax Association (NTA); Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; November, 2017

Association for Public Policy Analysis & Management (APPAM) Fall Research Conference; Chicago, Illinois; November, 2017

Southern Economic Association (SEA) Annual Meeting; Tampa, Florida; November, 2017

Labor and Public Economics Seminar Series; University of California, Irvine; January 2018

Eastern Economic Association (EEA) Annual Meeting; Boston, Massachusetts; March, 2018

Population Association of America (PAA) Annual Meeting; Denver, Colorado; April, 2018

Society of Economics of the Household (SEHO); Paris, France; June, 2018

Economics of Risky Behaviors (ERB) Workshop; Corsica, France; June, 2018

American Society of Health Economists (ASHEcon); Atlanta, Georgia; June, 2018

European Society of Population Economics (ESPE); Antwerp, Belgium; June, 2018

IZA World Labor Conference; Berlin, Germany; June, 2018

European Health Economics Association (EuHEA); Maastricht, Netherlands; July, 2018

German Socioeconomic Panel (SOEP) User Workshop; Berlin, Germany; July, 2018

L-R: Zach Fone, Tam Nguyen, Joseph Sabia

L-R: Andrew Dickinson, Toshio Ferrazares

WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM MY FRIENDS:
The Effects of Naloxone Access and Good Samaritan Laws on Opioid-Related Deaths

Gokhan Kumpas

WORKING PAPERS PRESENTED

“With a Little Help from My Friends: The Effects of Good Samaritan and Naloxone Access Laws on Opioid-Related Deaths”

“War! What is it Good For? New Evidence from Army Administrative Data”

“Do Ban the Box Laws Increase Crime?”

“Death, War, and God: The Effect of Military Deployments on Religion”

“Smoke Gets in Your Eyes: Medical Marijuana Laws and Tobacco Cigarette Use”

“Do Minimum Wages Increase Crime?”

“Does Female Sports Participation Affect Crime? New Evidence from Title IX”

“Minimum Wages and Low-Skilled Immigrants: New Evidence on Earnings, Employment and Poverty”

“Did the War on Terror Cause Opioid Abuse?"

“Child Access Prevention Gun Laws, Youth Gun Carrying, and School Shootings”

"Money and Drugs: Marijuana Decriminalization and Labor Market Outcomes"

CHEPS AFFILIATES REPRESENTED

Brandyn Churchill, PhD Candidate, Vanderbilt University

Andrew Dickinson, MA Candidate, San Diego State University

Toshio Ferrazares, MA Candidate, San Diego State University

Zach Fone, PhD Candidate, University of New Hampshire

Travis Freidman, PhD Candidate, University of New Hampshire

Gokhan Kumpas, PhD Candidate, University of New Hampshire

Taylor Mackay, PhD Candidate, University of California-Irvine

Thanh Tam Nguyen, PhD Candidate, University of New Hampshire

Joseph J. Sabia, Professor of Economics & CHEPS Director

Timothy Young, PhD Candidate, University of California-Irvine

L-R: Zach Fone, Andrew Dickinson, Toshio Ferrazares, Joseph Sabia, Gokhan Kumpas

War! What is it Good For?
New Evidence from U.S. Army Administrative Data
Joseph J. Sabia, Center for Hea
San Diego State University, Uni
William Skimmyhorn
This research was supported by a grant received fr
Research Institute at the University of California-Ir

Joseph Sabia

Are There No Atheists in Foxholes? The Effect of War on Religion

L-R: Travis Freidman and PAA conference attendee

PARTNERS IN SUCCESS

by Joseph J. Sabia, CHEPS Director

Our successes in CHEPS are a team effort, thanks to support on multiple fronts. Dean Norma Bouchard, Vice President Steve Welter, and Provosts Joe Johnson and Chukuka Enwemeka have provided strong institutional support for CHEPS's research efforts. In addition, faculty in the Department of Economics deserve immense credit for their investments in our research-focused graduate students. In particular, we are extremely grateful for the contributions of Hisham Foad, Ryan Abman, Clark Lundberg, Quazi Shahriar, Roger Frantz, and Shoshana Grossbard. And we look forward to fresh contributions from our new junior Economics faculty, Yang Liang and Hao Teng.

We are also grateful to our colleagues in the Paul College of Business and Economics at the University of New Hampshire, who have been wonderful academic partners. Their doctoral students provide immeasurable value-added to the CHEPS team. In addition, external funding from various sources, including the Charles Koch Foundation, has been invaluable in advancing the faculty-directed, independent scholarship of the Center. Academic freedom and intellectual diversity are the keys to a vibrant scholarly environment.

Finally, I want to thank all of those Cornell faculty who inspired me, in their own way, to found CHEPS. Elizabeth Peters, Rich Burkhauser, Don Kenkel, Steve Coate, Dean Lillard, Alan Mathios, Bill Rosen, Kara Joyner, J.S. Butler, Kosali Simon, John Cawley, and Michael Rendall were all highly influential. And without my parents (Betty and Pat), my first students (my grandparents, Maria and Joe Ruggiero), and my partner (Kevin Carlin), none of this would be possible.

CHEPS RESEARCH FELLOWS

Congratulations to the new CHEPS Research Fellows for 2018-2019. Fellowships were awarded to support tenure-track faculty engaged in outstanding scholarly activity in applied microeconomics and policy.

Ryan Abman
Assistant Professor
Department of Economics

Audrey Beck
Assistant Professor
Department of Sociology

Brandy Lipton
Assistant Professor
School of Public Health

Clark Lundberg
Assistant Professor
Department of Economics

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